

**H-2000 QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS PROGRAM****H-2010 GENERAL INFORMATION**

Effective January 1, 1998, Section 4732 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 required states to pay the Medicare Part B premiums for a new mandatory eligibility group of low-income Medicare beneficiaries, called Qualified Individuals (QI).

\*\*

To qualify for the QI program, an individual must:

- Be enrolled in Medicare \*\* Part A;

**Note:**

The applicant/enrollee does not have to be currently enrolled in Part B. The State Buy-In System will either start Part B coverage or override the applicant/enrollee's refusal of Part B. The applicant/enrollee does not have to be referred to the Social Security Administration (SSA) to enroll in Part B.

- Have income equal to or greater than 120 percent, but less than 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG) \*\*;

**Note:**

In January of each year, disregard the SSA Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) until the allowed limits are increased. Thereafter determine eligibility using all income including the COLA for the year.

- Have resources that do not exceed program limits (Refer to [Z-900 Resource Limits by Program](#)); and
- Meet all non-financial eligibility requirements for Medicaid.

The months of coverage for Medically Needy Program (MNP) shall not include previous Medicaid-covered months, excluding pure Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB), Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB), or QI certifications. The only instance in which a person can be certified for both MNP and QI is for retroactive MNP coverage. Due to system limitations, overlaps in eligibility cannot be avoided and previous eligibility cannot be removed. Since federal regulations stipulate that a QI cannot be otherwise Medicaid eligible, any prospective overlaps in MNP/QI eligibility must be avoided.

An applicant/enrollee who is eligible for QI can be certified in both the QI and Take Charge Plus (TCP) programs.

### **H-2010.1 Coverage**

Coverage is limited to payment of the Medicare Part B premium.

A QI will not receive a Medicaid card.

**Note:**

Although the BHSF Form 1-MB, Application for Medicare Savings Program, is commonly used to apply for initial or continued QI benefits, it is also acceptable to use BHSF Form 1-A, Application for Health Coverage.

## **H-2020 ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION PROCESS**

Determine eligibility by applying the following criteria. The elements have been listed in the most logical order, but work on all steps simultaneously.

### **H-2020.1 Determine Assistance/Benefit Unit**

The assistance/benefit unit consists of the applicant/enrollee. Both members of a couple may be applying, but each is certified separately.

### **H-2020.2 Establish Categorical Requirement**

Verify enrollment in Medicare Part A for the applicant/enrollee. Part A eligibility, the Part A start date, and the Medicare claim number can be verified on State Online Query (SOLQ) or Benefit Data Exchange (BENDEX).

### **H-2020.3 Establish Non-Financial Eligibility**

Verify eligibility for each member of the assistance/benefit unit with regard to the following factors:

- [Assignment of Third Party Rights](#) [I-200](#)
- [Citizenship/Alien Status](#) [I-300](#)
- [Enumeration](#) [I-600](#)

- [Residence](#) [I-1900](#)

**H-2020.4 Establish Need****A. Determine Composition of the Income/Resource Unit**

The income/resource unit consists of the:

- Applicant/enrollee;
- Applicant/enrollee and ineligible spouse living in the home; or
- Applicants/enrollees who are a couple.

**Note:**

If the SSA considers the applicants/enrollees as a couple for SSI, they are considered as an eligible couple for the purposes of budgeting in the Medicare Savings Programs (QI, QMB, SLMB). A categorically eligible spouse is one who is aged, blind, or disabled and does not have to be entitled to Medicare for the couple to be considered an eligible couple.

**B. Determine Need/Countable Resources**

Determine the total countable resources of the members of the income/resource unit. Refer to [I-1680, Need-Resources, Programs Not Related to LIFC or SSI](#).

Verification of countable resources is not required and should not be routinely requested. Accept the household's statement of resources unless other objective evidence establishes that the situation is questionable.

Compare the countable resources to the QI resource limit:

- For an individual, if there is not a spouse; or
- For a couple, if there is a spouse (eligible or ineligible).

Refer to [Z-900 Resource Limits by Program](#).

If the countable resources are greater than the resource limit, the applicant/enrollee is resource ineligible.

If the countable resources are equal to or less than the resource

limit, the applicant/enrollee is resource eligible. Continue determination of need.

### **C. Determine Need/Countable Income**

#### **Individual**

If the applicant/enrollee is an individual with no spouse or with an ineligible spouse with no income, compare to the QI income limit for one (1) person.

Complete the following budget steps:

Step 1. Determine the total unearned income.

Step 2. Subtract the \$20 SSI disregard from unearned income.

Step 3. The remainder is the countable unearned income.

Step 4. Determine the total gross earned income.

Step 5. Subtract any remainder of the \$20 SSI disregard from gross earnings.

Step 6. Subtract the earned income deduction from remaining gross earnings. The earned income deduction is \$65 and one half of remainder of earnings.

Step 7. The remainder is the countable earned income.

Step 8. Add the remainders from Step 3 and Step 7.

Step 9. Compare to the income limit for one (1) person.

If the countable income is equal to or greater than the individual income limit, the applicant/enrollee is income ineligible.

#### **Ineligible Spouse Deeming**

If there is an ineligible spouse with income, complete budget Steps 1 through 9 using only the applicant's/enrollee's income. If the income is equal to or greater than the individual income limit, the applicant/enrollee is ineligible and there is no deeming. Consider for MNP.

If the applicant's/enrollee's income is less than the income limit for one (1), apply deeming policy ([See I-1420 Need - Deeming](#)). Go to Step 1 of the couple budget.

### Couple

If both members of a couple are potentially eligible and there is income remaining in the deeming process, complete the following steps:

Step 1. Determine the combined countable unearned income for the couple.

**Note:**

When deeming income from an ineligible spouse, the income (of the ineligible spouse) remaining after allocation for ineligible children is combined with the income of the eligible spouse. The couple is then treated the same as an eligible couple for budgeting purposes.

Step 2. Subtract the \$20 SSI disregard per income unit \*\*.

Step 3. The remainder is the countable unearned income.

Step 4. Determine the combined total gross earned income of the couple.

Step 5. Subtract any remainder of the \$20 SSI disregard from gross earnings.

Step 6. Subtract one earned income deduction from the remaining gross earnings of the income unit. The earned income deduction is \$65 and one half of the remainder of the earnings.

Step 7. The remainder is the countable unearned income.

Step 8. Combine the remainders in Step 3 and Step 7.

Step 9. Compare the total countable income to the QI income limit for two (2) persons.

If the countable income is equal to or greater than the income limit for two (2) persons, the applicant/enrollee is not eligible.

If the income is less than the income limit for two (2) persons, the

applicant/enrollee is income eligible. Refer to [Z-200 Federal Poverty Income Guidelines](#).

#### **H-2020.5 Eligibility Decision**

Evaluate all eligibility requirements and verification received to make the eligibility decision.

#### **H-2020.6 Certification Period**

The certification period can be effective no earlier than three (3) months prior to the application date provided the individual is otherwise eligible and is enrolled in Medicare Part A.

Coverage of QI is mandatory. However, federal funds are limited. Therefore, the state is authorized to limit participation so that the total assistance provided is (on an estimated basis) equal to, but not greater than the funding allocated to the state for participation.

Individuals who are eligible for QI shall be certified on a first come, first served basis. Individuals who were receiving assistance either under QI, in December of the previous year and remain eligible, or in the case of QMB or SLMB, become eligible under the QI program, must be given preference. Once an individual is determined eligible, he/she is entitled to receive assistance for a twelve (12) month certification period as long as he/she remains eligible and funding for the program is available.

#### **H-2020.7 Notice of Decision**

Send the appropriate notice of decision to the applicant/enrollee.